

the cost of living higher by blocking new energy production, keeping taxes high and fighting the things that will actually lower the cost of living such as lowering the cost of gasoline and lowering the cost of health care.

The Family Prospect Act includes the first increase in the minimum wage in almost 10 years. It includes a reduction in the death tax so small family farms and businesses will not have to be sold. It includes tax credits for college tuition, welfare to work, and many other things we know will create jobs. It is truly the Family Prosperity Act.

I call on my colleagues to stop obstructing what we are trying to do. We believe we can raise the income of every American and that we can lower the cost of living if we just work together.

I hope all of our colleagues, Republican and Democrat, will see the individual family in America is much more important as far as their income than the Government. By passing this bill, at least moving on to debate at the end of this week, we will have done a lot to reassure Americans that we do care about lowering the cost of living so they can live more prosperous lives.

GULF OF MEXICO ENERGY BILL

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to comment on S. 3711, the Gulf of Mexico energy bill. I believe this legislation strikes an appropriate balance between our need for new sources of oil and natural gas, with the concerns of the coastal States.

I do support passage of S. 3711, but I do not support the bill passed by the House of Representatives earlier this year. The careful compromise that is the Senate bill cannot be found in the version passed by the House. I will not support any legislation that opens South Carolina's coast to drilling for oil.

I am supporting the Senate bill, but I wish that it went further to address our energy dependency issues. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, the world's demand for energy is expected to double in the coming years. This should be a call to intensify our efforts to become energy independent as soon as possible. We must continue to fund research into alternative sources of energy such as hydrogen. Where suitable we need to use solar power and potentially wind. We must expand production of ethanol beyond corn so that all regions of the country can produce ethanol efficiently.

As a cochair of the Senate Manufacturing Caucus, I voted for this legislation to increase our supply of natural gas for manufacturers. According to a study by the Congressional Research Service, 24 percent of our natural gas is consumed to generate electricity. While it is very easy to generate electricity from gas, it is a very inefficient

use of the resource. Instead of electricity generation, natural gas should be utilized for industrial and home heating use.

For electricity generation, we need to continue encourage a renaissance in nuclear power. This involves reducing the regulatory redtape involved in constructing new plants, opening Yucca Mountain, and proceeding with spent nuclear fuel recycling. Nuclear power is an efficient zero-emission source of energy that can address both our energy and climate concerns.

I applaud the ongoing work of Senator DOMENICI and others to help increase the supply of critical energy resources. This bill is a small step in the right direction, and I look forward to working to further this effort beyond what we are accomplishing today. I also encourage my colleagues in the House that if they are truly serious about passing a bill to increase the supply of natural gas and oil this year, S. 3711 needs to be passed by the House as soon as possible.

STRENGTHENING CFIUS

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for this Chamber's efforts to strengthen our CFIUS process—a system of screening foreign investment to make sure our national security is not compromised. In light of recent concerns about investments that did not receive adequate scrutiny, I think is imperative that we review this process and improve upon it where needed. It is important, however, that we do not modify the process in such a way that we create a system that unnecessarily discourages companies from investing in the United States. In order for our country to maintain our competitive advantage, we must make sure that we continue to be the worldwide choice of location for businesses. Although we have passed legislation out of the Senate intended to strengthen CFIUS, this legislation did not have the benefit of floor debate. I encourage the chairman of the Banking Committee, Senator SHELBY, to continue to solicit the views of the Members of this Chamber and address concerns that may be raised about the impact on direct investment before we begin to conference with the House on the measure.

WHITE PINE COUNTY CONSERVATION, RECREATION, AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, yesterday my colleague from Nevada, Senator REID, and I introduced the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006. This bill is the product of bipartisan cooperation and it represents a fair compromise on a number of issues relating to the protection of White Pine County's natural resources. While not perfect, this measure strikes an appropriate balance between economic devel-

opment, privatizing Federal lands, and designating wilderness areas. On whole, the White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006 is a good piece of legislation and it should be passed.

White Pine County, NV, with fewer than 10,000 residents, is in rural eastern Nevada. The county has seen more prosperous times. The closure of mines has been hard on the local economy. Additionally, the Federal Government manages a high percentage of land which makes it difficult to foster growth. The bill seeks modest changes to the land ownership pattern to allow White Pine County to grow and increase its tax base, and gives residents some modest tools they need to prosper. We have also provided the same tools to the Ely Shoshone Tribe. We accomplish these goals through land disposal, natural resource and wildlife conservation, tourism development, additional protection for the wondrous Great Basin National Park, recreation opportunities, Nevada State Parks expansions, wilderness designation, and a study to determine if off highway vehicles should have a designated route through the county.

The White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006 is modeled on an innovative law that I coauthored as a member of the House of Representatives with former Senator Richard Bryan. That measure, the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998, SNPLMA, is widely regarded as a huge success. Two successor laws I wrote with Senator REID and Congressman GIBBONS, the Clark County Protection of Lands and Natural Resources Act of 2002 and the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004 followed SNPLMA.

These county bills for Nevada can and should be replicated in every county in Nevada. Many other Western States with large public land holdings may benefit from our Nevada model. The premise is simple: not all land is suitable for public ownership, and other public lands are suitable for increased protection. We settle longstanding wilderness issues by designating permanent wilderness areas and release wilderness study areas to multiple use. Years of disagreements between developers, multiple use advocates, governments, environmentalists, conservationists, and other stakeholders are settled by these land bills. Bringing together people from diverse interests has actually proved to be a very healthy exercise in Nevada; it has fostered a spirit of cooperation that will benefit generations of Nevadans to come.

The White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2006 also proposes significant amendments to the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998. In some instances, we revise provisions in current law that need improvement. We add new expenditure categories for

projects that will be beneficial to the citizens of Nevada and our environment.

For example, an improvement we make to current law relates to local governments in Clark and Lincoln Counties that use parks and trails funds in the SNPLMA special account. The localities are having difficulty building approved parks and trails projects. Local governments have to front their own funds and seek reimbursement from the Bureau of Land Management to build these projects. In some cases, this means millions of dollars that have to be borrowed or taken from other programs. To help local governments speed the development of parks and trails, we propose to pay local governments up front, eliminating a cumbersome reimbursement process. We can still maintain the financial integrity of all expenditures.

Additionally, we have significantly streamlined the affordable housing provisions in current law. Our revisions will make Federal land available at a discount for workforce housing and improve the lives of hard working families across the state of Nevada.

For new expenditure categories, we have taken great care to propose using the SNPLMA special account for critical needs, and in particular, for projects and initiatives that have broad support from the environmental and conservation community. We propose a clean water project for Lake Mead in southern Nevada and hazardous fuels reduction programs for two of the most heavily visited and fire prone areas in Nevada: Lake Tahoe and the Spring Mountains. We seek to conserve Colorado River water through the buyback of turf from public entities. Eighty five percent of the special account is now used for environmental and recreational purposes. We do not seek to break from the purposes for which SNPLMA was established in 1998; doing so would be controversial and harm the prospects of the passage of this bill.

The White Pine County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act is the culmination of 2 years of hard work and spirited debate. Our staffs have worked together closely and have made visits to and held meetings in White Pine County on numerous occasions. We have received thousands of comments and useful suggestions from people across Nevada. This bill touches every corner of our beautiful State, and I am proud to have been part of this endeavor. I look forward to working with my colleagues and interested parties to improve this bill as necessary.

In summary, under title I, the bill authorizes the disposal of up to 45,000 acres of BLM land in White Pine County. Distributes proceeds through a White Pine special account.

Under title II, the bill designates roughly 545,000 acres of wilderness in 13 new wilderness areas and adds wilderness to two areas established in 1989.

The White Pine County Commission supported approximately 500,000 acres. Standard language is included stating primacy of Nevada water laws in wilderness areas. Wildlife water developments are protected in wilderness areas.

Under title III, the bill transfers approximately 645 acres to the Fish and Wildlife Service to be managed as part of the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge. In lieu of expanding the size of Great Basin National Park and in an effort to simplify land management and protect lands near Great Basin National Park, the bill transfers 117,000 acres from the Forest Service to the BLM. Of this amount, 54,400 acres are withdrawn from mineral entry and other form of entry. Motorized access is confined to existing routes. This withdrawal language does not intend for the withdrawal area to be managed as an NCA, but it will likely require an update of the Resource Management Plan after the transfer of administrative jurisdiction is completed. It is also intended through bill language that the BLM honor existing permits and cooperative agreements approved by the Forest Service.

Under title IV, the bill conveys Federal lands to expand two existing Nevada State parks: Cave Lake State Park and the Ward Charcoal Ovens State Park. The bill also conveys land to expand the Steptoe Valley Wildlife Management Area. Finally, the bill conveys Federal lands for the expansion of the Ely Airport and industrial park, with certain restrictions.

Under title V, the bill authorizes a 3-year study for a possible extension of the Silver State Highway Off-Highway Vehicle Trail from Lincoln County through White Pine County. The route may only be designated if the Secretary determines that there would not be significant impacts to natural, or cultural resources, and wildlife. While the bill provides the Secretary with discretion, it is my view that providing a designated route for motorized use can actually preserve resources and wildlife in areas that are not appropriate for motorized use.

Under title VI, the bill expands the Ely Shoshone Tribal Reservation by 3,500 acres. Extensive negotiations concerning the ownership of land just south of Ely strived to equitably balance the future expansion needs of the city of Ely with the economic development needs of the tribe.

Under title VII, the bill authorizes funding from the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act to be used for the Eastern Nevada Landscape Project. The project will improve landscape restoration projects that reduce the risk of fire, prevent the endangerment of species, and improve watersheds.

Under title VIII, this title significantly amends the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998, SNPLMA, to improve the effectiveness of the act, while proposing new con-

servation-oriented expenditure categories from the special account.

Specifically, for SNPLMA special account expenditure categories, the bill provides new authority for (1) the expansion of the Southern Nevada Water Authority's water saving "Cash for Grass" program to public entities for permanent turf removal; (2) the implementation of the Clark County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Program, as was intended by the authors of SNPLMA; (3) the Clean Water Coalition's Lake Mead and Las Vegas Wash water quality pipeline project; (4) two comprehensive, 10-year hazardous fuels and fire prevention plans for the Spring Mountains and the Lake Tahoe Basin—including adjacent areas in Nevada along the Carson Range; (5) Nevada State Parks in Clark County to access parks and trails funding from the special account; (6) the Bureau of Land Management to clear and protect lands designated for sale in the Las Vegas Valley, alleviating the dumping problem; and (7) a one-time park/trails/natural area nomination in Washoe County—remainder of Ballardini Ranch lands offered by a willing seller.

For SNPLMA improvements, the bill streamlines the current law's affordable housing provisions that make Federal land available in Nevada at a discount. SNPLMA's current ceiling of serving persons not more than 80 percent of median income has been lifted to 120 percent, and future BLM land auctions of more than 200 acres in the Las Vegas Valley will require housing builders to set aside at least 5 percent of the units for affordable housing as defined by SNPLMA. The bill also speeds the progress of local governments' parks and trails projects by replacing a cumbersome reimbursement system, which constrains the financial ability of local governments to finance projects, with a requirement that local governments be paid up front.

Under title IX, this title establishes the Great Basin National Heritage Route. The House and Senate have each approved legislation designating this National Heritage Route; however, the bill has not reached the President for final approval. Designation of the Route will ensure the protection of key educational and recreational opportunities in White Pine County and neighboring Millard County, UT.

COSPONSORSHIP OF S. 3709

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, on July 24 the majority leader placed a list of the Senators who had sought to be cosponsors of S. 3709, the United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act, into the RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent that an updated list of those who wish to be listed as cosponsors be printed in the RECORD at this time.

Senators LUGAR, BIDEN, HAGEL, CHAFEE, ALLEN, COLEMAN, VOINOVICH, ALEXANDER, SUNUNU, MURKOWSKI, MARTINEZ, DODD, KERRY, NELSON, OBAMA, CORNYN, BAYH, and HUTCHISON.